

NEWS ON OUR OPTILAB COMPLAINT ABOUT THE EMPLOYER HINDERING OUR WORK

The decision of the TAT labour administrative tribunal in response to our complaint that the employer had hindered our work as a union came as a great disappointment to us. Our complaint was based strictly on the meetings held on September 28, 2016. We asserted that the health minister had employed a deliberate and unacceptable anti-union strategy when, without prior consultation, he co-ordinated simultaneous announcements of the projected measures (transfers of personnel, change of employers, abolition of jobs), in all our institutions in Québec on September 28. For administrative judge Nancy St-Laurent, the act of communicating information (however sensitive that information may be) does not hinder union activities. She didn't take into account the period in which the events arose or the fact that the MSSS was no longer responding to our requests to meet.

Despite this defeat, we believe that our action has left its imprint on the ministerial OPTILAB team. The outcome of the complaint wasn't a forgone conclusion; those in charge at the MSSS had to put in a lot of work to defend themselves. In future, they know that we won't hesitate to take the necessary measures to protect our members and the future of their profession. Hopefully they'll think twice before they do it again, knowing that we'll always be there to remind them about our union rights.

This was worth fighting for. We're proud to have demanded respect. If we had to do it all over again, we wouldn't hesitate for a moment. The OPTILAB reorganization can't be done properly without the input of medical technologists and the union representing them.

OTHER ACTIONS

On April 10, the APTS filed petitions to represent medical technologists in the Laurentians and Lanaudière whose employer is now the *CISSS de Laval*. On May 29, the TAT labour administrative tribunal granted certifications to the APTS.

For the regions of the Gaspé, Côte-Nord and Abitibi-Témiscamingue, we filed three petitions with the TAT under the *Labour Code* and the *Act respecting bargaining units in the social affairs sector*, contesting the change of employer and the fact that, to this day, there has not been any actual cessation of activities between the employers concerned. In a preliminary meeting on May 3 to prepare for the hearing, we were informed that all three petitions would be heard together. On July 13, a second meeting will take place to prepare for a hearing in the fall. For now, the certifications for these three teams are on hold, and the employees are still considered part of their original bargaining unit.

In the lab clusters involving the Montérégie region, the CHUM and the MUHC, the memoranda of understanding for the transfers are still in the process of being signed, even though the "administrative" transfers have been official since April 1.

A NEW PHASE OF MOBILIZATION

Now that the April 1 deadline has passed, we're entering another crucial phase in our mobilization campaign. The OPTILAB team at the MSSS and the representatives of various lab clusters are going to try to implement in practice what was planned on paper. We have to be able to demonstrate that our fears were well-founded, that some components of the reorganization project are still missing and that others make no sense. We have to be front and centre on the public stage to point out and call for alternatives that will protect the population, your working conditions, and your jobs.

We have to portray the situation on the ground as accurately as possible. To do so, your help is indispensable. Feel free to convey any relevant information to the political liaison officer and the union counsellor responsible for the OPTILAB file in your institution.

ASSOCIATE DEPUTY MINISTER AT THE MEDICAL TECHNOLOGISTS' CONVENTION

Dr. Michel A. Bureau, associate deputy minister at the MSSS, will present a review of the OPTILAB process at the end of the convention held by the *Ordre professionnel des technologistes médicaux du Québec* (OPTMQ). His presentation will be given on Saturday, June 10 at 3:00 pm at the *Palais des Congrès de Rivière-du-Loup*. It is important to note that Dr. Bureau is the one who instigated the OPTILAB project, which he vigorously defends. We invite you to turn out in droves for this plenary session, which is an excellent forum for getting your message across and asking questions.

The APTS will have an information booth at the convention on June 8 and 9. We invite you to come and meet with us to talk about the latest developments in the lab reorganization.

